



FASHION INTERNATIONAL

NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION WORLD

MARCH/APRIL 1996

A Modern Approach

Although "designer" collections still get tremendous press coverage, the big thrust in the market is on secondary lines or lifestyle dressing. While companies continue to downsize and the economy continues to stagnate, the customer base for bridge collections is growing rapidly. The image is one of quality and taste offered at 1/2 to 1/3 the price of the more prestigious primary collections.

Oscar de la Renta, one of the latest designers to launch a secondary collection with **OSCAR**, incorporates day, evening, and weekend clothing into this line. "I wanted to create a collection with a modern approach to dressing today's woman," said Mr. de la Renta. About his customer he states, "she has diverse interests and commitments, and wants clothing that works with her lifestyle."

His Fall '96, daywear focuses on dresses, with ladylike sheaths and A-lines worn with matching coats. Suiting pieces are sophisticated in crepe and twill, while colors are classic in black, gray, taupe, and red. Knitwear is a key component

continued on page 4

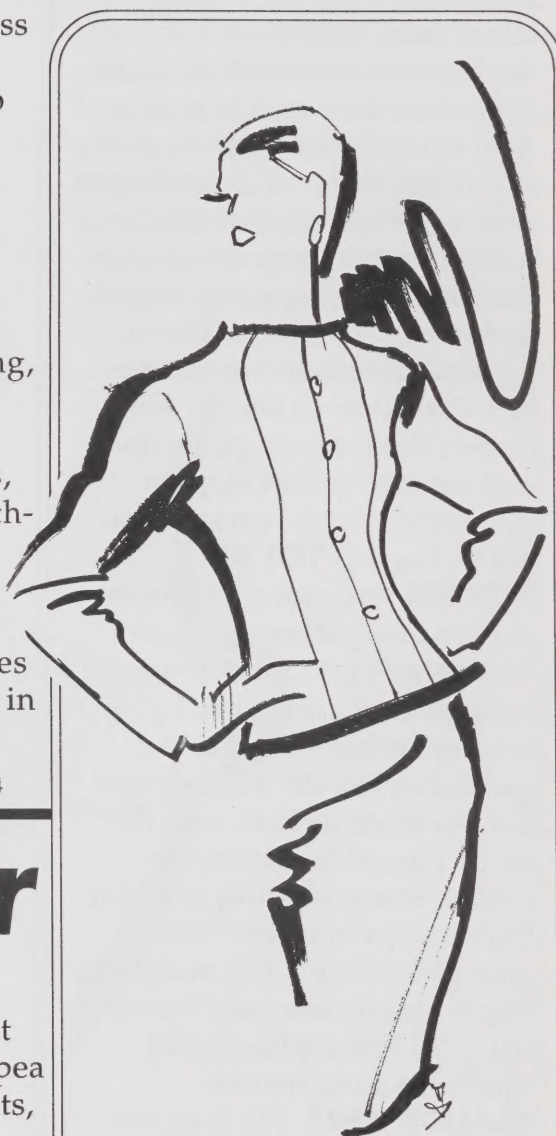
A Foreign Affair

FALL/WINTER 1996

There's no doubt about it, European RTW designers have tempered their creative flights of fancy with a healthy dose of restraint. Clothes are all about looking and feeling good throughout a busy day. There

are certain key elements that prevail this season — from pea coats, tailleurs, low rise pants, reefer coats and sheath dresses, to fabrics like pleather, Ultrasuede, nylon, and knits. Brown is the important color with happy brights like orange, violet and citron adding inter-

continued on page 2



OSCAR

est to the more expected neutrals and darks.

JOHN SMEDLEY is showing beautiful merino and cashmere knitwear for men and women. The trend for Fall '96 is towards longer, fitted shapes, and elegant simple classics. We love the intarsia argyle sweaters, striped pullovers, a neat zip-back dress and a chic fitted shirt. Starting twenty years ago in Paris with a reputation for perfectly fitting stretch pants, **TEENFLO** has now evolved into a total collection. For Fall the low rise extended tab boot leg pant is new and very chic. Also sharp is a shrunken shirt and notch collared, four-button jacket with patch pockets. In cotton stretch there are important shades of espresso, camel and honey. In viscose blend, the shallow pleat trouser is a new direction to watch. For career, the long shaped princess seamed jacket atop an A-line skirt looks smart. Also out of Paris is **TOI DU MONDE** with young contemporary designer sportswear. The lightweight stretch wool suitings and knits with Lycra are key. What's fun are the quilted nylon 40" reefers, and the zip-front jackets, and the mock crocodile outerwear pieces. Sharp looking is a long tailleur in a mini red/black glen plaid vinyl. The matching hipster pants are only for the truly fit! For sophisticated luncheon suits there's **CLAUDE BERT**. We love the novelty wools, ladylike shaped bodies and slim skirts. Standouts include an apple green textured wool with welt seaming and a row of five gold

continued on page 5



A Treasure Trove

FI recently attended the New York International Gift Fair, held semiannually at the Javits Convention Center. This is the largest, most important gift and decorative accessory market in the U.S. With its strong international presence and diverse product range (approximately 2,350 exhibitors participate, representing more than 20 countries), the Fair attracts more than 45,000 buyers from around the world. On our foray through the aisles we took note of those exhibitors that offered excitement, swag and above all, profit opportunities for your stores.

GRANDMOTHER'S BUTTONS has jewelry crafted from antique buttons. There are jet 3-button bar pins, gold button locket, jet crystal necklaces, pearl drop earrings, button barrettes, Victorian fob earrings and much more. Because the buttons are antiques each piece is one-of-a-kind. In addition there's a selection of handmade European lustre glass buttons, which are crafted in old molds. These are gold and silver recreations of 1930's originals.

KALIMA JEWELRY shows classic contemporary designs in sterling, vermeil/sterling combinations and 14K gold with semi-precious stones and freshwater pearls.

HOLLY YASHI is premiering her romance collection of jewelry in handcrafted sterling, 14K gold-filled and

precious niobium. Designs play up European crystals, freshwater pearls, Victorian cameos and semi-precious stones in delicate small scale pieces. At **GIGI ACCESSORIES**, the HUG-A-BEAR items with genuine diamond accents are the latest in a line of keepsake jewelry. Whimsical pins, in polymer resin castings of original scrimshaw designs, are available at **TREE OF LIFE ARTWORKS**. Choose from the cat, wildlife, celestial or nature series.

STREAMLINE IMPORTING has a beautiful line of "Angel" watches using authentic Renaissance art reproductions on the dials and Italian

leather bands. **CUFF AND COMPANY's** jewelry line is made exclusively with cuff links struck from hand cut turn-of-the-century molds. The look is of uncluttered simplicity in jewelry created with revivals of Victorian and Art Deco cuff links. The collection includes antique gold brooches, bracelets, watches, earrings and necklaces. Delicate pearl and crystal necklaces, floral lockets and Art Nouveau cluster pins are standouts at **NANCY MARSHALL**. At **VERA BRADLEY DESIGNS**, in addition to gracious home accessories, there are fabric

continued on page 4



VERA BRADLEY DESIGNS

with luxurious angora wools, refined cables and argyles, and even poodle knit jackets. For evening, elegant suits are in silk dupioni, and knits take on shimmering metallic accents.

Isaac Mizrahi, another designer who recently threw his hat into the ring, calls his secondary collection **ISAAC**. He refers to this line as "the best bargain in bridge," with a mix of 60% sportswear and 40% career, and prices that are just below the entry level in the traditional bridge market.

For Fall, **ISAAC** offers an extensive collection, with everything from traditional tweed suits to bright, ski-inspired jackets and stirrups in blues, greens, and pinks. Coats become part of the ensemble, such as the slim, double-breasted wool knit coat over V-neck pullover and skirt, all in creams and camels. The pumpkin mohair coat also looks great over chocolate suede pieces.

At Calvin Klein's **CK** collection, the silhouette is slim and fitted with lean jackets and narrow bottoms. Stretch has been added to refined wool crepe and gabardine to give traditional glen plaids and hound's-tooth that extra edge. Patch pockets, poor-boy ribs and epaulettes add a military feel to a button-front shirtdress or cavalry twill coat. New and unexpected color combinations punctuate the collection, such as camels with bright orange, plum with purple, and royal blue

with brown. Embossed leather biker jackets and baby shearlings are shrunk to fit as close to the body as possible.

A LINE for Anne Klein takes a '90s approach to sportswear with some vintage touches. Charcoal flannel serves as the base cloth providing a jacket, pants, skirt and wrap dress to mix with bright prints and silky solids. Classic boucle suits are spirited in apple green or bright purple. Other fun touches include a faux fur collar on a fitted twill jacket and brightly colored Fair Isle sweater sets that mix with leather and wool bottoms.

Clean, modern sportswear is at **COMPANY** by Ellen Tracy. A red, black and white group is sleek and simple with a high button blazer, "Mod" vest, seamed skirt and "racing" sheath in fabrics

that include cotton canvas, wool twill, cotton corduroy, and quilted nylon. Accent pieces appear in this group in whimsical "techno" fabrics such as snakeskin, micro suede, sheer crocodile, and stretch cotton cashmir.

COLLECTION MMcF by Mary McFadden is inspired by the far away cultures of Lisbon, Madrid, Tokyo, and Caracas. These day-into-evening suits have an exotic appeal with a modern approach. Fitted jackets, both short and long, pair with straight matching skirts and narrow cigarette pants. Fabrics, imported from France and Italy, include satin weaves, pearly brocades, geometric jacquards, boucled organza, and burnt sparkling velvets. Buttons are hand-embroidered Austrian crystals, and 22K gold-plated metal.

"TREASURE TROVE" continued from page 3

totes, shoulder bags, duffels, clothes and more. New this season is a quilted fabric checkbook cover in a pretty pastel floral nosegay pattern. The familiar fanny pack is updated in a quilted paisley. It has an adjustable belt, zipper closure and outside zip-pocket. There are great items at **TRAVEL BAGS BY SANDRA**. The line has everything from zip-top totes and duffels, to garment covers and make-up bags that come in a range of printed fabrics. **SECOND EDITION LTD. I. F. O.** offers fashion forward handbags for Summer in nylon/patent, crocodile/nylon combos, faux snake and two-

toned patent. **URBAN OXIDE** is a new unisex line of totes, sacks, backpacks, slings and travel bags crafted in durable "rubeur" material with nickel oxide hardware. **L'AGENDA MODERNE, PARIS**, has superb agendas, diaries, address books and accessories hand crafted in box calf, lizard printed calfskin, and pigskin. **THE DECORATIVE MOTIF, INC.** has charming footstools, pillows, albums and home accessories in petit point, needlepoint, damask, velvet and brocade. Highlights include the needlepoint/damask shoulder bags with corded shoulder straps and

continued on page 6

buttons, and a gray pinstripe notch collared tailleur with black belt. Also chic is a black belted, black/white tweed suit with faux leather collar and cuffs. For career oriented sportswear there's Belgian designer **MIGOSCHA**. Extremely attractive is a 3/4 wool/cotton pea coat and coordinating slim skirt, and a dark green nylon blend top- per that pairs with tweedy knit pieces in chartreuse and absinth. Very chic and streamlined is their 39" double-breasted reefer in black wool. **FENDISSIME** is taking a clean spare approach to outerwear in brown, black and white pleather. The zip- front cropped jacket and 4-button reefer is stylish. The pleather pieces are meant to be matched with simple merino wool knit separates. In their classic brown mens- wear check group there's a short sleeved shift with wide hip belt in faux tortoise patent that's very '70s — cute worn under a "tortoise" patent pea coat. The pea coat crops up again in brown nylon with an Ecospun quilted lining. **CLAUDE ZANA's** contemporary sportswear plays up Ultrasuede, pure wool and triacetate/polyester blends. There are nice novelty tick weaves, especially a self- belted jacket and 21" skirt in chocolate. The Ultrasuede double-breasted reefer in chamois works over every- thing. One of the most beautiful collections is **INDIES**. The emphasis is on muted color sportswear in unusual fabrications. The lightweight boiled wool

pieces are magnificent in shades of brique, anthracite, cobalt, etc. A one-button shaped tie-back jacket with flap pockets is exceptional, but so are the stretch gabar- dine pants, Fortuny pleated skirts, popeline and wool crepe shapely jackets, and classic cropped mohair sweaters. The detailing and trims set this collection apart.

For day-into-evening fashion forward sportswear and suit- ing looks there's **BATISTE**. The emphasis is on fabrication and lush colors. Jackets are long, streamlined and shown atop flat front pants or slim skirts. **FUEGO** does elegant, predominantly knit sports- wear. There are black/white hound's-tooth merino blend pieces with red border ac- cents that are stylish. We also like their intarsia sweaters in black merino with black chenille overplaid, and the black patent zip-front top- per with leopard print knit lining and cuffs. **ZANDRA RHODES II** is a new diffu- sion collection aimed at a younger customer. Each piece is hand painted on pure silk. There's a very pretty cocktail dress in packable crinkle silk with spaghetti straps, a black 3-piece ensemble with shell, soft palazzo pants and an airy chiffon jacket that's painted with a gold scroll motif border. From the U.K. comes fashion forward **WHISTLES**. Standouts in- clude brightly colored voltage tweed suits, a double-faced PVC fly-front coat, and the "hairy coating" '60s reefer in lime, orchid, midnight or black mohair blend. It's very ladylike yet

has a hip edge. **LAUREL's** up-tempo collection is shot through with color. Water- melon and orange ice pop when played against black. The cropped zip-front jacket and shift dress captures a youthful attitude as does a nylon ski jacket with zip- front and faux fur collar. This is shown with a box quilted A-line skirt. **ESCADA** has handsome spice toned tweeds. The cinnamon blazer takes brown suede leaf appliqué detailing and sleek stretch jeans in brown. A double-breasted novelty check blazer gets bone suede elbow patches and camel wool pants. A muted copper polyurethane belted trench is a nice item day or night. **ESCADA ELEMENTS** is a new younger career driven collection that's playing up wardrobing and generous fit. Colors are dark neutrals with a menswear approach to styling. **LOUIS FERAUD** is introducing designer Alistair Blair for Fall/Winter '96 with a refined feminine collection that breathes new life into this venerable French house. Smartly styled sheaths take velvet, satin and beaded trims. Jackets are fitted with asymmetric cuts or longer lines and skirt lengths run the gamut. Outstanding — a cranberry wool coat over a double-faced cranberry blazer and slim black pants, a navy knit military-inspired pantsuit with standup collar and cuffs in wine with shiny gold buttons, a quilted mock crocodile barn jacket with black faux fur collar, and a welt seamed zip-front brown boucle luncheon suit.

tassel closures, and the petit point photo albums and address books. For the ultimate in luxury faux fur throws there's **ADRIENNE LANDAU**. Outstanding — sheared mink with wool jersey back, leopard with satin, and tiger with wool jersey and sable tails. The home furnishing collection also includes elegant pillow shams, novelty animal throws and more for the well dressed home. **BONE SIMPLE DESIGN** offers original hand painted designs on satin and linen decorative pillows. Perfect for display purposes are their tables that combine steel wire with veneer plywood and hardwood detailing. The table surface, inspired by textile design, have inlaid patterns in mahogany or walnut veneer and an ash hardwood edge. Large and small end tables and a coffee table are available. To grace these beautiful tables, hand cast pewter "Folk Tales" frames created by artist Ruth Reynolds Darby are available from **ASHLEIGH MANOR**. New designs include "Copter" and "Choo-Choo." These photo frames come in 2x3" and 3x3" sizes. At **ADAM SCOTT LTD.**, there are many lovely decorative accessories to enhance a table top and catch the eye. Standouts include silver baroque and gold cherub candles, colorful Madras paper stacking boxes and frames, and a wide range of bath salts in glass bottles with fleur-de-lis or heart stoppers. For the unusual, as

well as practical items, look to **KATSU**. Here are individually handcrafted night lights and wall lamps combining wit, humor, and detailing: aluminum bugs, vegetables and fish motifs that are ornamental, sculptural and functional. **ART TO PART WITH INC.** shows creative flair with innovative handmade wooden postcards that are able to be mailed, as well as ornaments, gift tags and decorative note pads made from recycled papers. Aside from being a novel way to address a wrapped package, the tags can serve as ornaments or as functional accents for floral arrangements or gift baskets.

The perfect gift basket might include an item from **PEACOCK ALLEY**. They cater to a pampered lifestyle with scented bath products, candles, body lotions/creams/powders, as well as luxurious 100% Egyptian cotton bed linens, towels and coordinating wrap robes. At **HANNA'S POTPOURRI SPECIALTIES, INC.**, there are home fragrance accessories, scented cones, candles and keepsake gift boxes. **PACE MANUFACTURING INC.** also has gorgeous foaming bath gels and body oils, gift sets, bath accessories, tiny travel bags and spa pillows and cosmetic bags, plus much more in their extensive range. **AROMAFLORIA** offers herbal therapeutic bath and body products in mood-inducing aromas derived from essential plant oils. Choose from bath salts, oil inhalation beads, etc. Enhance your retail

surroundings with concentrated fragrance beads in 6 different scents.

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